AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-20. (canceled)

21. (currently amended) Sampling method that can be used in an automatic analysis apparatus, said automatic apparatus ~~included~~ including a needle (5) for taking a sample to be analyzed, said sample being removed from a receptacle (30), said needle being fixed on a rocker mobile about an axis (X2) forming an angle with said sampling needle, characterized in that it comprises the following steps:

- rotating the sampling needle about the axis (X2);

- driving the sampling needle in translation relative to the rocker by driving means comprising a carriage (13) mobile in translation relative to the rocker and also a belt (15) stretched radially between a drive pulley (16) and a loose pulley (17), one of these pulleys serving as a pivot on the rocker, the carriage being fixed on the belt.

22. (previously presented) Method according to claim 21, characterized in that translation and rotation movement are independent.

23. (previously presented) Method according to claim 21, characterized in that, to remove the sample, the sampling needle is moved such that it points downwards.

24. (currently amended) Method according to claim [[23]] 21, characterized in that, to remove the sample, the sampling needle is moved such that it points upwards.

25. (previously presented) Method according to claim 24, characterized in that if the receptacle is stopped with a bung (31), the receptacle is directed such that the bung points downwards, then the bung is pierced with a needle by inserting it at least to the depth of said bung.

26. (previously presented) Method according to claim 21, characterized in that, to remove the sample, the sampling needle is moved such that it forms an angle with the vertical.

27. (previously presented) Method according to claim 21, characterized in that, after having removed a sample, the needle is moved to a distribution position, (P2, P3) where the needle points downwards above a vessel (32, 33).

28. (previously presented) Method according to claim 27, characterized in that there is a position of the needle, in

rotation about axis, so that the vessel can be removed from the apparatus.

29. (previously presented) Sampling device usable in an automatic analysis apparatus, said device including a needle (5) for taking a sample to be analyzed, said sampling needle being fixed on a rocker mobile about an axis (X2) forming an angle with said sampling needle, means (13-18) for driving the sampling needle in translation relative to the rocker, said driving means comprising a carriage (13) mobile in translation relative to the rocker and a belt (15) stretched radially between a drive pulley (16) and a loose pulley (17), one of these pulleys serving as a pivot on the rocker.

30. (previously presented) Device according to claim 29, characterized in that it comprises means so that the needle can be moved all around the axis.

31. (previously presented) Device according to claim 29, characterized in that the angle formed by the axis and the needle is a substantially right angle.

32. (previously presented) Device according to claim 29, characterized in that the sampling needle is mounted mobile

in translation relative to the rocker, describing a movement which moves it away from or towards the axis.

33. (previously presented) Device according to claim 29, characterized in that it comprises means so that translation and rotation movements are independent.

34. (previously presented) Device according to claim 29, characterized in that the sampling needle is mounted mobile in translation through a body (7) fixed relative to the rocker.

35. (previously presented) Device according to claim 34, characterized in that it includes means (9) for fixing the body by locking on the rocker.

36. (previously presented) Device according to claim 34, characterized in that the sampling needle and the body form part of a double needle (3) also comprising a pre-piercing needle (6), the sampling needle being mounted sliding in the pre-piercing needle.

37. (previously presented) Device according to claim 36, characterized in that the pre-piercing needle is mounted fixed on the body.

38. (previously presented) Device according to claim 29, characterized in that the sampling needle is mounted by locking on the carriage.

39. (previously presented) Device according to claim 29, characterized in that the carriage is fixed on the belt and mobile in translation on a guide (14).

40. (previously presented) Device according to claim 29, characterized in that at least one needle (5, 6) includes a rinsing head (35, 36); in that it includes a tube (33, 34) to carry a rinsing product to said rinsing head, the rocker including at least one chute (37) to guide said tube from the vicinity of the rinsing head to the vicinity of the axis (X2).

41. (previously presented) Device according to claim 29, characterized in that the rocker includes means (24, 25) for pivoting the rocker about its axis.

42. (previously presented) Device according to claim 41, characterized in that the pivoting means include a rack (24) forming an arc about the axis (X2) and a pinion (25) engaging in the rack to drive the rocker in rotation about the axis.

43. (previously presented) Device according to claim 42, characterized in that the rack is provided on the rocker, in a part of the rocker distant from the axis.

44. (previously presented) Device according to claim 43, characterized in that the pivoting means comprise a belt or a cable or a screw/nut device.